

Working Through Pain Brings a Beautiful New Venture

By Mary Pat Byrne

Have you ever wanted to do something you didn't go to school or train for.... Something completely different, maybe a little creative? Marion Gold, 65, of Scottsdale did just that - she took her hobby of beading and her eye for color and turned it into a new business.

A medical journalist by trade, Marion enjoyed a successful career as an editor, and EVP of a health communications agency in Chicago. She always had a creative flair in business strategy and in how she portrayed her business persona – always meticulously dressed in St. John suits and matching pumps with expertly applied makeup. She even sported a bejeweled calculator on her desk as she ran a million dollar health care business in the 1980's.

Finding Purpose through Pain

In 1994, Marion launched her own editorial company, but she says her world stopped when both her parents died within two years of each other; her father Larry in 2000 and mother Ray in 2002.

“At the age of 58 I found it hard to write. A book I was writing languished. Articles didn't get beyond the first two paragraphs. My mother's strength helped me face the grief of losing Dad. Now they were both gone, and despite a satisfying career and home life with my soul mate Jerry, I felt as though my heart had been broken and I would never again find peace,” she said.

In sorting through her parent's treasures in New Jersey, Marion found boxes of vintage beads from one of her mother's many craft projects and remembered her mother's unfailing creative spirit. She set aside the book she was writing and began to work with the beads, which soothed her. Her partner Jerry encouraged her to, “Do what feels right to ease your pain and grief.”



(Photo of Miriam by Yeruchem Ben ReuvenSyma)

Marion found working with the beads “joyful” and saw it as a way to memorialize her parents. “Jerry encouraged me to show my beaded products to a gallery shop. As a marketer I was used to making cold calls, so I set up an appointment, put a sample case together and I was off. Imagine my delight when “ChiaroScurio,” a boutique on Chicago's Magnificent Mile was displaying and selling my work,” she recalled.

Continued on next page...

“So here I was at the age of 58, suddenly starting an entirely new business called ***Moonbeams, Lilacs and Roses.***

I felt a sense of energy again, and I imagined my mom and dad encouraging me,” she explained.

The company name is derived from personal experience: “Moonbeams” is a Hebrew symbol of renewal, “Lilacs” were Marion’s mother’s favorite flower, and “Roses” are Marion’s flower of choice.

Designing a Unique Collection

Marion started out making and selling bookmarks, beaded pens, and letter openers. Today she offers a diverse collection of beaded gifts and jewelry with exotic gemstones like topaz, larkspur, purple agate, fossil coral, bronzite, jasper, jade, malachite and black onyx adorned with her signature sterling silver accents. Fans of Marion’s say she has a great sense of color and design. They describe her jewelry as elegant, whimsical works of art. Many of her new customers are a result of girlfriends admiring their friend’s unique necklaces and bracelets. “Each beaded product I create is something I would like to have on my own desk. Each jewelry design is something I would feel good about wearing or giving as a gift,” she explained.

In developing her business, Marion launched a website (designed by ATG Productions) – as an online retail company to sell her luxury crafts. She uses her photography skills to take “jewelry portraits” for the site and advertising materials. “Today, I spend a lot of

time reading about each gemstone, so I can describe it accurately online. And I’m learning a lot about selling online, and using the newer techniques of social marketing on Facebook and Twitter,” she said.

Transforming Passion into a Business

What would Marion advise to someone wanting to take a passion and turn it into a business? “It helps to love what you are doing. Remember that not every day brings sales. And it takes dedication, hard work, good friends and lots of good luck.”

“My parents set a beautiful example of great strength, courage, and love throughout their lives. They understood that life is indeed a journey, and often a journey in the midst of pain. But life also takes us to unknown places,” she said. “It is my hope that my personal journey down the path of love and remembrance will inspire others. I miss my parents, and not a day goes by that I don’t think of them. The creative process is one very important way that I honor them,” she said.

Retirement Plans?

Are there retirement plans any time soon? “Retiring has never been on my agenda. I’ve always felt whether it is writing, mentoring, or designing jewelry- there is always something new and interesting that I can accomplish,” she said. “I still have my communications and publishing business, but it’s the Moonbeam’s side of my work that always puts a smile on my face and in my heart.

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